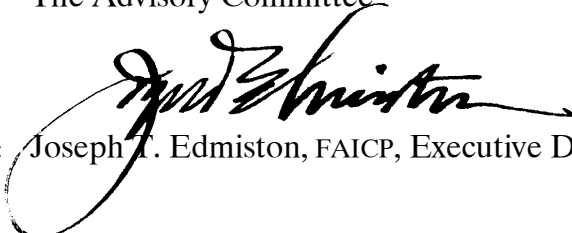


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: September 27, 2004

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 14: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Soka University acquisition (APNs 4455-015-002, 4455-016-032,-033, 4455-028-043, 4455-033-003,-005,-006,-007,-009,-010,-011,-018,-021,-022,-023,-026, 4455-034-001, 4455-035-001, 4455-040-007,-010), unincorporated Calabasas area.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the attached resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds in an amount not to exceed \$6,000,000 to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for the Soka University acquisition, unincorporated Calabasas area.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204(c) of Public Resources Code.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has submitted a grant application for Proposition 40 funding in the sum of \$6,000,000 for the Soka University acquisition project. The acquisition would protect significant land and water resources because the subject 588 acres is a key wildlife linkage, contains core habitat, and is a significant scenic resource. The property consists of twenty tax parcels and is bounded by Malibu Creek State Park and Las Virgenes Road to the west, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA) open space and privately-owned land to the south, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)-owned Las Virgenes View Park and privately-owned land to the north, and privately-owned land to the east.

On August 30, 2004, the Conservancy approved the Project Plan for Soka University, which describes the property's characteristics in detail and proposes a management plan.

The MRCA has obtained an appraisal for Soka University and submitted it to the State Department of General Services for review. The MRCA is working with several potential grantors to secure the total purchase price for the property, including the Wildlife Conservation Board, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and State Coastal Conservancy. The total amount being requested from the potential grantors is subject to approval of fair market value by Department of General Services and will be used solely for acquisition. The requested Proposition 40 funds are necessary to complete the purchase.

The proposed acquisition is consistent with Article 5, Land, Air, and Water Conservation, Section 5096.650(b) of Proposition 40, the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal Protection Act of 2002, and is in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Acquisition of Soka University is consistent with and necessary for the regional objectives of numerous park agencies and other groups including the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, California Department of Parks and Recreation, National Park Service, County of Los Angeles, Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, and the Santa Monica Mountains Resource Conservation District.